

OVERVIEW

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) operates a tracking system through the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) for all permanent state wards who are legally free for adoption with the permanency goal of adoption. Tracking of all permanent wards begins on the date of case acceptance of the referral to adoption. Status is tracked until the child is placed for adoption or the permanency goal is changed.

All state wards whose goal is adoption must be registered, either on hold or for photolisting with MARE.

The MCI superintendent has given written authorization for the MARE to use personal information of an MCI ward on their public website for adoption recruitment purposes. For permanent court wards, the adoption worker must seek written approval or a court order from the court to allow the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange to use personal information on the permanent court ward on their public website for adoption recruitment purposes. The adoption worker must also document when they requested this approval/order and when they received approval in the [DHS-614, Quarterly Adoption Progress Report](#).

NOTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION PROCESS

MDHHS and contracted adoption agencies must report to MARE on the progress toward adoption for all wards being tracked. The following MARE notification and registration process must be followed.

MARE Registration

The contracted adoption agency or local MDHHS office responsible for adoption planning must send the MARE registration through the MARE website. All MARE forms are available online on the [MARE website](#) and must be submitted electronically through the MARE website. One of the following must be submitted within 60 calendar days of the date of the receipt of the order terminating parental rights or the date of acceptance of the adoption referral, whichever is later:

- Hold Registration Status on the child profile for Child being Adopted by relatives, unrelated caregivers or current foster

parents, including a copy of the signed DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt.

- Photolisting Registration - For child appearing on MARE website.
- Hold Registration Status on the child profile for Recruited Adoptive Family, including the signature page of the family's current CWL-3130, Initial Foster Home/Adoption Evaluation.
- Order Placing Child (PCA 320).
- Proof of permanency goal change to a plan other than adoption by court order.

Children with an Identified Adoptive Parent

For children who have an identified adoptive parent, the child must be registered on *hold* on the MARE public website within 60 calendar days of receipt of the court order terminating parental rights or the date of acceptance of the adoption referral, whichever is later or for children who are photolisted on MARE, the date the family signs the [DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt](#). A copy of the signed [DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt](#), from the prospective adoptive parent must be submitted with the registration status.

The applicable *hold* status on the Child's Profile must be selected on the MARE public website:

- Foster Parent *hold* or Relative *hold*.
- Recruited Adoptive Family *hold*.

Hold cases will continue to be monitored by MARE; and the child will not be photo-listed for recruitment purposes. If, at any time, the prospective adoptive family decides to no longer proceed with the adoption and if no other family has been identified, the child must be registered with MARE for recruitment purposes within 30 days of the adoptive family providing written withdrawal of their Intent to Adopt.

The adoption worker must update the child's registration status to open status and submit the photolisting documentation requirements outlined in the subsection below. An updated *hold* registration status may be submitted when a new adoptive parent is identified.

Children may not be listed on *hold* for more than six months. If a child is to remain on *hold* after six months, a face-to-face case review meeting must occur and must be documented in the adoption worker's case contacts; see [ADM 0610, Placement Decisions for Adoption of a Specific Child \(Consideration\)](#) for face-to-face case review meeting requirements. Additionally, a MARE HOLD- Extension report documenting the circumstances that warrant an extension must be sent to MARE within 15 calendar days of the six-month date and quarterly thereafter, until the Order Placing Child After Consent is issued or a goal change occurs. The MARE Hold-Extension Report must detail the reasons for continuation of the hold status, the plan for adoptive placement and the projected timeline. The adoption program manager in MDHHS central office or designee will review all requests for extensions and may require additional documentation.

Children Without an Identified Adoptive Parent

If an adoptive parent has not been identified for a child, the child must be registered for photolisting on the MARE system within 60 calendar days of receipt of the order terminating parental rights or the date of acceptance of the adoption referral, whichever is later. In cases where a child's goal has changed to adoption from another permanency goal and there is no identified adoption resource, the child must be registered for photolisting on the MARE system within 60 calendar days of the date the goal was changed by the court.

The MARE registration for photolisting must include all of the following:

- Strength based information documented in the child profile.
- Child Specific Recruitment Plan.
- High quality, current photograph of the child.
- Youth Consent Booklet Signature page (if child is age 9 or older).

A child without an identified adoptive parent must have their MARE photolisting registration current within 12 months at any given time.

For children who are photo-listed on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) website and a potential adoptive family is in process of being identified or a change in the child's plan is in process, the adoption worker must submit one of the

photo-listing registration status changes to MARE within five business days of a status change occurring. This will identify the status of the adoption process next to the child's photolisting on the MARE website. The photolisting registration status changes are:

- Photolisting Status Change- *Reviewing Homestudies*. This registration status change must only be submitted to MARE to display this status on the MARE website prior to the 21-day time frame from the first family inquiry per policy.
 - The *Reviewing Homestudies* status can be used for up to 21 calendar days from receiving the first family inquiry before placing a photo-listed child on hold or placement pending status or returning the child to Open status.
 - At the end of the 21 calendar days, the child will automatically be returned to Open status.
- Photolisting Status Change-*Placement Pending*. This registration status change includes the identified family's name and must be submitted to MARE when a full disclosure is in process, the child is visiting with a family or a relative is being explored prior to the DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt, being signed and/or the potential family has not yet been approved for adoption.
 - The *Placement Pending* status can be used for 60 calendar days for a photo-listed child before placing the child on *hold* with a foster parent, relative or recruited family.
 - At 60 calendar days, the child will be returned to *Open* status

Extensions may be granted upon MARE approval.

 - If the plan changes for the child prior to the 60 calendar days, the adoption worker must return the child to *open* status.
- Photolisting Status Change- *OTHER*. This registration status change must be submitted to MARE if the court ordered recruitment to cease or for a pending goal change.
 - This status may be used for youth whose goal is being changed to Guardianship, Placement with a Fit

and Willing Relative or APPLA and the agency is awaiting the order from the court.

- If the adoption worker has been instructed by the Michigan Children's Institute (MCI) to change the child's photolisting status to other.
- This status can be used for 90 calendar days before returning the child to *open* status. At the end of the 90 calendar days, the child will be automatically returned to *open* status.

Receipt of Documentation After Deadline

If MARE receives documentation after 60 calendar days, financial sanctions may apply to contracted adoption agencies.

Discharging Children from MARE tracking

The child's registration status is tracked by MARE until the child is placed for adoption or the permanency goal changes. When a child is placed for adoption, the child's adoption worker must submit within 14 calendar days of receipt, the PCA 320, Order Placing Child to discharge the child from MARE tracking.

When a child's permanency goal changes, a copy of the court order changing the permanency goal to a goal other than adoption must be submitted to discharge the child from MARE tracking.

Registration Following a Disrupted Adoption

The adoption worker must submit a child registration to MARE within six months of the court order of adoption disruption if there is no identified family at the time of disruption. This period allows the agency time to help the child adjust to the disruption, if necessary.

**Registration
Following a
Dissolved
Adoption**

The adoption worker must submit a child registration to MARE within 60 calendar days of the order of termination/release of the adoptive parent's parental rights; an exception to this timeframe may be granted by the MDHHS Adoption Program Office.

POLICY CONTACT

Questions about this policy item may be directed to the [Child Welfare Policy Mailbox](#).